



**Testimony Before the House Committee on Veterans and Emergency Preparedness  
Relating to Support of HB 2449  
March 12, 2019**

**Submitted by Jim McCauley, Legislative Director League of Oregon Cities**

Chair Evans and Vice-Chairs Lewis and Meek and Members of the Committee:

The funding increase proposed within HB 2449 without question will allow for additional investment into 911 communications across Oregon. As you know 911 revenues generated from hardline, and wireless products account for less than 25 percent of the facility operations at the local level in either local government run facilities or the network of Public Safety Answering Point (PSAPs) in Oregon. The added revenue will help stabilize the operations in rural communities across Oregon. Funding stability is critical for the daily operational needs of many 911 facilities in rural Oregon.

911 fees have not been increased since 1995, yet costs related to implementing a state-wide digital network, text-to-911 service, hardware upgrades, software needs, increased staffing to handle call volume, and virtually every other cost associated with running a 911 facility. The revenue side of the equation however has not kept up with this added cost, because revenue distribution is reliant on the additional phones added to the system and not call volume.

HB 2449 not only adds additional revenue to the 911 system, but is making adjustments in the distribution formula to make sure the added revenue reaches the needs across Oregon's emergency communication facilities.

As part of the League of Oregon Cities vetting process with members a constant theme emerged over the support of policies and funding packages intended to invest in rural communities across Oregon. HB 2449 fits this vision from the League and the following bills fit into the rural investment vision supported by the League.

**Broadband Infrastructure**

**HB 2173** – Creates the Oregon Broadband Office within the Oregon Business Development Department.

**HB 2184** – Adds a portion of wireless communications into the Oregon Universal Service Fee surcharge structure creating a stable funding source for broadband deployment in underserved areas of Oregon.

**Housing Assistance**

**HB 2228** – Allocates \$2.5 million from the general fund for the 2019-2021 biennium to establish a Local Government Technical Program for smaller counties and communities within the Oregon Housing and Community Services Department.

**Economic Development**

**HB 3110** – Provides \$875,000 annually to provide expansion of grant writing in Economic Development Districts focused on counties less than 12,000 and cities less than 2,500.

**SB 932** – Provides funding and technical assistance to municipalities in need of improvements to wastewater infrastructure across Oregon.